

The story of Conrad is an interesting, if somewhat confusing, one. He was born in Hong Kong on 21st August 1880, the son of Ernest John Eitel and his wife Mary Anne Winifred, nee Eaton. His father was a German national and in Hong Kong worked for the British Governor there. His mother was English. The family moved to Adelaide around 1898. On 26th December 1901 he married Florence May Solomon in Adelaide.

He became Secretary to the Douglas Mawson Expedition, responsible for raising funds. On Boxing Day 1912 he left Hobart on the AURORA to retrieve Mawson and his men from Antarctica returning to Hobart in March 1913.

On 11th August 1914 he enlisted in the Machine Gun Section, AN&MEF stating that he was a Journalist and gave his wife at Philip St Neutral Bay as his next of kin.

Conrad was involved in the attack by the Australians on the Bita Baka Radio Station near Herbertshohe. He was used as an interpreter as he spoke fluent German and was mentioned in the news reports back in Australia of the actions in taking the radio station. According to Conrad, a week or so later he was approached by Captain Harris informing him that the Prime Minister of New Zealand had sent a message saying that he, Eitel, had been in the German Army, that he was a German Reservist and a spy. Whilst there was some concern over his German heritage, that the New Zealand Prime Minister was in any way involved has not been corroborated. However, Conrad's German heritage continued to cause him problems in later service.

Whilst in Rabaul he served as interpreter and on 5th October 1914 he was promoted Corporal. He returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 4th March 1915 having completed 206 days service.

He enlisted in the AIF on 12th May 1915 but was discharged on 16th July due to his German parentage. He then went to Melbourne where he again enlisted, this time under the name Lionel Lambert Eaton. He was cited CSM with the 14th Reinforcements, 5th Battalion, regimental number 4569. Again, his parentage came into question and he was court-martialled on 3rd Feb 1916 and was found guilty of giving false information on his attestation papers, where he gave an incorrect name and did not disclose his prior service. In the hearing he suggested that once his true identity had been discovered he made up that he had been in the German Army as he thought this might strengthen his case to go overseas. It is not clear whether he had ever been in the German army.

Conrad was discharged on 17th Feb 1916 on the grounds of his being of German parentage and that "... having served according to his own statement, three years in the German Army." He never got to fight in Europe.

Conrad died at Parkville Victoria in 1947.